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ABSTRACT

The University of Nevada's "Good Neighbor" nonresident tuition plan for residents of 10 contiguous California counties is described. Data was gathered and interest cultivated over an 8-year period to bring the "Good Neighbor" proposal before the Board of Regents who subsequently approved it. Previous to the new policy, all out-of-state students paid the registration fee and the full nonresident tuition of \$1,500 per semester. With the institution of the new policy, nonresident students approved under the "Good Neighbor" policy pay \$200 per semester tuition. Those students provide documentary photocopy proof of graduation from an approved out-of-state institution or of a 12-month continuous residence in one of the 10 "Good Neighbor" counties. The policy affects residents of the Lake Tahoe basin, the area of the Alpine, El Dorado, Inyo, Lassen, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, and Sierra counties of California. Since passage of the policy, admissions related activities from the target area have increased substantially. The increased interest may be due to financial savings to the student, the university's proximity, degree programs offered, and the low student faculty ratio. The process of developing and approving the policy included a draft proposal approved by the faculty senate, and a proposal developed by a university wide enrollment planning group, five references and two tables are included. (JB)

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The Nevada Initiative

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A Good Neighbor Nonresident Tuition Plan:
The Nevada Initiative

Introduction

Expanding the recruitment and service area of a constitutionally established, land-grant university from a state and local focus to a regional perspective requires planning and research. Developing strategies and a subsequent plan of action to broaden the scope of service of an institution of higher education takes patience, perseverance, data collection analysis, as well as economic impact information. A carefully articulated timetable is helpful in bringing about the desired goals of increased enrollment and cultural diversity.

Becoming a Good Neighbor

Before the "Good Neighbor" policy was initiated, out-of-state students paid the registration fee and the full nonresident tuition at the University of Nevada, Reno. Now, the registration fee for undergraduate-level courses is \$40 per credit. Graduate-level courses are \$50 per credit. In addition to the per-credit fee, the nonresident tuition of \$1,500 per semester is assessed undergraduate and graduate students (excluding four-year medical students) registered for seven or more credits who are nonresidents of Nevada. While out-of-state students pay no additional registration fees, tuition of \$200 per semester is charged to nonresident students who are approved under the "Good Neighbor" policy. Each student is responsible for providing documentary photocopy proof of graduation from an approved out-of-state institution or of continuous residence in a "Good Neighbor" county for the 12 month period claimed on the admissions and records application. The current "Good Neighbor" policy

affects residents of what is referred to as the Lake Tahoe basin, the area of Alpine, El Dorado, Inyo, Lassen, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, and Sierra counties of California.

On January 26, 1988 the University of Nevada System Board of Regents approved a policy effective for the 1988 fall semester, regarding the regulations for reduced nonresident tuition. This proposal named the "Good Neighbor" policy stated that residents of ten contiguous or adjoining California counties may qualify for reduced nonresident tuition upon enrollment at the University of Nevada, Reno or any of the state supported institutions in northern Nevada. The specific parameters of the Good Neighbor Nonresident Tuition Policy cited in the 1989-90 University of Nevada, Reno General Catalog include:

A graduate of a specifically designated high school or community college, in a state bordering on Nevada, may be charged reduced nonresident tuition when enrolling at the University of Nevada, Reno, Northern Nevada Community College, Truckee Meadows Community College or Western Nevada Community College. Furthermore, an individual who resides in a county in which a designated high school or community college is located, and who has maintained a legal bona fide resident status for a period of at least 12 consecutive months prior to the first day of the semester in which enrollment is sought, may also be charged reduced nonresident tuition.

The reduced nonresident tuition for approved applicants is \$200.00 per semester. The policy is effective for each qualified student who is approved for admission and enrollment effective for the next semester. Students approved under this new policy are ineligible for any claim for refund of nonresident tuition already paid to the University of Nevada, Reno.

Since passage of the "Good Neighbor" policy, admissions related activities from the target area have increased substantially. One obvious reason is the financial savings of \$1,300 a semester for students approved under this plan. A popular premise is that in addition to fiduciary concerns, the University's proximity, degree programs offered, and the student faculty ratio (of 19 to 1) all add to the attractiveness of the University of Nevada, Reno.

The first semester the "Good Neighbor" policy went into effect was for the

1988 fall semester. Since then, a close monitoring of inquiries, applications, offers of admission, and registrations is being conducted. Please refer to tables I and II for an enrollment breakdown by California county, credit load, level and status for the 1988 and 1989 fall semesters (Davidson, 1989). The total number of applications received for this enrollment period included a large percentage of continuing enrolled students. Nevada County, California is the home of record for the greatest percentage of good neighbor participants. A study conducted by Davidson (1982) of individuals enrolled from these ten contiguous counties revealed that over two-thirds of the students were registered for six or less credits a semester. An assumption was made that some may have been trying to avoid payment of the nonresident tuition. As seen from tables I and II, a very high percentage of students from the "Good Neighbor" counties are now enrolling for seven or more credits a semester.

Historical Background

It had taken approximately eight years to collect and analyze the data, cultivate interest and support, and develop a cohesive strategy to bring the "Good Neighbor" proposal before the members of the University of Nevada System Board of Regents for review. In 1982, the first draft of a proposal (Davidson, 1982) was completed as a subcommittee charge of the Institutional Studies and Budget Committee at the University of Nevada, Reno. This initial prospectus suggested that:

A person whose domicile is in a county of another state lying immediately adjacent to Washoe County, or whose place of residence is within thirty (30) miles of the University of Nevada, Reno shall be classified out-of-state but shall not be required to pay out-of-state tuition at the University of Nevada, Reno. Provided, however, that there be no college or university within the nonresident's own state, of equal distance to said nonresident's bona fide place of residence.

The committee and the faculty senate voted to approve the Contiguous Counties Tuition plan. No official action was taken by the President, and his

TABLE I
GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY
1988 Fall Semester Report

SUMMARY

Total applications received	240	100%
Total applications approved	225	94%
Total applications disapproved	15	6%
Total approved students registered	183	81%

ENROLLMENT BY COUNTY, CREDIT LOAD, LEVEL AND STATUS

California County	No.	%	Credit Load			Level		Status	
			0-6	7-11	12+	UG	GR	New	Cont.
Alpine	2	1.0%	1	0	1	1	1	0	2
Eldorado	18	9.8%	2	4	12	17	1	12	6
Inyo	19	10.4%	0	3	16	19	0	15	4
Lassen	24	13.1%	6	2	16	22	2	18	6
Modoc	3	1.6%	0	0	3	3	0	2	1
Mono	8	4.4%	0	2	6	8	0	6	2
Nevada	49	26.8%	9	12	28	44	5	27	22
Placer	34	18.6%	5	7	22	29	5	21	13
Plumas	17	9.3%	0	1	16	17	0	12	5
Sierra	9	4.9%	0	1	8	9	0	4	5
Totals	183	= 100.0%	23	32	128	169	14	117	66
Percentages			12.5%	17.5%	70%	92%	8%	64%	36%

TABLE II
GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY
1989 Fall Semester Report

SUMMARY

Total applications received	147	100%
Total applications approved	139	95%
Total applications disapproved	8	5%
Total approved students registered	96	65%

ENROLLMENT BY COUNTY, CREDIT LOAD, LEVEL AND STATUS

California County	No.	%	Credit Load			Level		Status	
			0-6	7-11	12+	UG	GR	New	Cont.
Alpine	0	0 %	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Eldorado	10	10.4%	0	1	9	10	0	10	0
Inyo	2	2.0%	0	1	1	2	0	2	0
Lassen	9	9.4%	0	3	6	7	2	8	1
Modoc	3	3.1%	0	1	2	2	1	3	0
Mono	6	6.3%	0	1	5	4	2	5	1
Nevada	25	26.1%	7	5	13	18	7	17	8
Placer	24	25.0%	3	6	15	20	4	15	9
Plumas	12	12.5%	0	0	12	12	0	11	1
Sierra	5	5.2%	0	1	4	3	2	3	2
Totals	96	= 100.0%	10	19	67	78	18	74	22
Percentages			10.4%	19.8%	69.8%	81%	19%	77%	23%

executive council decided to table the motion but discussion on the subject continued.

Interest in the topic of responding to the financial concerns of students from the Lake Tahoe basin surfaced again in 1984 upon the creation of a university-wide Enrollment Planning Group at the University of Nevada, Reno. A directive from the President charged the planning group with the assignment of developing a comprehensive action proposal integrating recruitment and retention efforts. The members of this committee soon discovered that an important secondary recruitment market was in the Lake Tahoe basin, also known as the Sierra Nevada communities of eastern California. Davidson (1982) reported that many inquiries and applications for admission are from individuals who reside within a sixty mile radius of the Nevada state line.

During the academic years of 1985-86 and 1986-87, representatives from all teaching institutions of the University of Nevada System were asked by the Chancellor to formulate tuition proposals and establish priorities based on their service areas and institutional needs. In the spring of 1987, under the guidance of the UNS Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs, a cohesive proposal was written addressing the fiscal concerns of the residents in eastern California. Members of the enrollment planning group were instrumental in spearheading this action.

This proposal, entitled the "Good Neighbor" policy reflected socio-economic concerns (Hansen, 1987). A general premise focused on the fact that many people living in the eastern California communities bordering on the state of Nevada (within a sixty mile radius) rely on the "silver state" economy for goods and services. The close proximity creates a natural link. Many of these Californians share common social attitudes, values, material needs and environmental concerns with their neighbors to the east and look to the academic

community of Nevada for post-secondary education. Furthermore, many students from this service area participate in Nevada high school athletic contests, debate tournaments, and other special events.

Summary

The "Good Neighbor" policy has been received with overwhelming enthusiasm in almost all of the eastern California communities. Many of the residents in these ten counties now feel that their long standing support of the Nevada economy has finally been acknowledged and rewarded. This plan provides a cost effective opportunity for access to post-secondary education for individuals in the entire region. The University of Nevada, Reno will continue to provide instructional services and leadership training to students from California. The executive, administrative, instructional, and classified support staff are all committed to this partnership in achieving excellence in education. In return, the Nevada economy, academic community, and society is expected to grow and prosper from this arrangement.

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